

Fiducialism

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v. 0.1, 1 October 2018

v. 0.2, 23 August 2020

My website is 10v24.net

The type used is Donald Knuth's Computer Modern Serif.

Creation account:

A being all alone, almost formless and void, seeking someone to trust, cast off another being from itself, a smaller or more finite fragment of itself, which could say what the first being, or person, wouldn't think of.

(In a different account, communication precedes creation, and the two beings always existed and were always communicating.)

These two spoke to each other, at first having to invent language itself in the process of inventing the very first words. These words were powerful words, spoken by both voices, spoken by a strong voice, spoken by the weaker speaking through the stronger. These words enabled the relationship between the two persons.

After an infinite amount of time, or a time which could be stretched to infinity, the two persons had an entirely harmonious, that is, sustainable, relationship, with a stable and many-varied vocabulary. Between the two of them, reality had its nature.

Then they sought to increase that which they might trust, and from the first, greater, being, more fragments were split off. And the new fragments learned the language of the first two beings, and added to it, according to the strength of their voices and their skill with the language.

INTRODUCTION

I considered leaving the old version up to represent my old self, but I think this material is worth bringing into the present.

Differences from v. 0.1: I cut most of the introduction. Also changed some wording in the main text.

Some notes from the old introduction:

So rather than pragmatism (“do what works”), I want to follow fiducialism (“do what is trustworthy”).

I think trust is more fundamental than power. Friedrich Nietzsche had a view that everything boils down to the will to power (and so at least in this area I’m influenced by him, by reacting to him, from afar). I think that more fundamental than power is trust, because we trust in power. We trust in the will to power. And I see that other thinkers propose other “wills to” to explain human psychology (that is, human being). But trust is more fundamental than will. We trust in will, and wills.

My understanding of trust has been heavily influenced by a book I read by Joseph Godfrey, *Trust of People, Words, and God*. His definition of trust, “receptivity to enhancement”, is broad enough for me to use as a fundamental principle of empirical being. I am a little bit uneasy to use his definition because the word “trust” doesn’t connote “receptivity to enhancement” to all people, being, for them, rather, narrower.

b. An argument is a system of thoughts or experiences that tries to demonstrate the trustworthiness of something.

c. Making your argument stronger does not necessarily make you a more trustworthy person.

d. Putting your trust in one thing can in itself dispose you to fail to trust another.

e. To seek a perfect faculty of recognizing trustworthiness produces sophistication.

f. Sophistication, and the way of life it recommends, are not necessarily trustworthy.

19.

a. There is a certain level of trustworthiness in anything which is trusted.

b. Finite beings trust finitely.

c. Trust can make some things trustworthy just by them being trusted.

- c. Our reason to trust the universe is not to be seen in any one thing.
- d. Science rests on the trustworthiness of the scientist.
- e. People do not trust in the hopes of people they find untrustworthy.

17.

- a. It is possible to trust, to connect to the reality of, the seen, and the unseen.
- b. A kind of trust is possible of what you choose not to experience.
- c. An experience fully trusted is about the thing experienced.¹⁰
- d. Experiencers are present in their experiencing.
- e. To continue a good thing is enhancement. Each new moment is added to the ones before.

18.

- a. Some things will leave if they are not trusted.¹¹

Am I importing “common language” consequences when I use the word “trust”? Am I making people think that common language trust (interpersonal trust in some form?) is what is fundamental? Whenever I think it through, his definition makes sense to me, and the connection of personality to experience by way of a flexible “trust” seems true, so I feel I am acting in good faith by presenting this booklet, especially as I have revealed my working definition of trust in this paragraph. But is “receptivity to enhancement” *really* what trust is? Or am I in some sense misleading myself or perhaps my readers by relying on that definition? So I am curious to re-read his book to see if it suffices.

(footnote said “(later) having re-read the chapters on his definition of trust, I am okay with publishing this booklet.”)

(another said “Thanks to Sarah Imrisek for comments on a draft of this booklet.”)

¹⁰ By contrast one that’s not about what’s experienced, like the sip subordinate to an awkward conversation, rather than taken for the drink’s sake.

¹¹ e. g., an aspect of yourself, or a person.

TEXT

g. Not trusting, and even more so, not having to choose to not trust, gives people a kind of power.

h. People who do not trust their environments are always alone.

14.

a. Being trusted is to be told that you are trustworthy.⁸

b. There is a committed or even heroic trust.

15.

a. What betrays us teaches us to call it injurious.

b. We are tempted to look on injurious things through the lens of infinity⁹ – this brings us evil.

c. What enhances us teaches us to call it beneficial.

d. We are tempted to look on beneficial things through the lens of infinity – this brings us enchantment.

16.

a. Wisdom enables us to trust, and to not trust.

b. If anything is to be found trustworthy, the universe must have a minimum trustworthiness.

⁸ Inspired by Godfrey, p. 52

⁹ Infinity uncountable, undelineable, charged, vast, with “beyond” to it

f. You thoroughly engage in a conversation with someone and enjoy it because you find them amusing and easy to dismiss.

g. As you watch the cartoon on your phone, you relate each scene and beat and frame to the ongoing story of the episode, and process it according to the pre-rational and rational ways you process experience.

h. You offer to help someone out of love-or-duty, out of your limited resources, but they were conning you and you should have and could have known it.

13.

a. Paths, definition: We trust in paths as we learn their trustworthiness.

b. Sometimes people are on the same path or paths as us, but at different levels of trust in them or having trusted in them.

c. Sometimes people are not on the same path or paths as us.

d. Belonging requires a certain shared path, and either bending or leading.

e. There is a universe of trustworthy things. We come to trust more and more of it.

f. Some people seem to have no choice but to trust, or to have to make themselves not trust.

First thoughts:

0.

We only know what we experience.

Experience just is an experiencer experiencing.

Everything that exists is experience.

Everything we experience is real.

Not everything we experience is trustworthy.

Experience just is trust.¹

All that exists is trust: a person trusting an experience.

There is such a thing as betrayal.²

When we are betrayed, we trust what betrays us.

(What is betrayal? Examples can easily be given, symptoms, etc. But what is it in itself?)

1.

Because we can be betrayed, we do not fully trust what we experience.

1 We trust parts of things, but not always the whole.

2 It is something like an insult to trust (“insult” in the medical sense).

We want to know ways of sorting through experiences, so as to trust what is unlikely to betray us, rather than what is likely to betray us.

We need a science of experience, a way to relate all of our experiences systematically, according to rules which are themselves trustworthy.

We learn the rules from our forebears, or we learn them from our own betrayals. We learn that A tends to lead to B.

This science proposes the existence of things we can't directly experience. To some extent, we can imagine them, but we can't see them with our eyes the way we can see simple experience.

If these fabricated experiences help us avoid betrayal, then they are trustworthy, and our science is trustworthy.

2.

There is a kind of distrust or withholding of trust that accompanies prudence, and that is an avoidance of betrayal.

But we have another way of life, adventure. Adventure seeks out great quantities of experience. Fullest-grown, it is the endless exploration of the inexhaustible.

Adventure seeks to avoid boredom, seeks to take in the largest experiences, and senses when a chain of experiences will not give it its quantities.

f. Guilt and shame are laws.

11.

a. Derealization is not necessarily a lack of trust, but the choice of nihilism is.

b. What is difficult to trust can train a person to not try.

12.

Real experience:

a. You watch the large, high definition TV. The story is riveting. An enormous bear growls. You do not flee the room.

b. You work at the factory, using your own two hands to put a bolt on one part of one kind of car. On some level, after some weeks or months on the job, you don't put any bolts on any cars when you work at the factory.

c. You and your significant other send each other cassette tape letters in the mail.

d. You talk to someone face to face, freely in the environment of their trustworthiness, interested in what is being said and connecting to the other person as themselves.

e. You talk to someone but your attention wanders.

b. Patience is trust in what is beyond the moment of pain. Stoicism is distrust of the awareness of pain. In either case, there may be made no outward complaint.

c. Formulas are simplifications of reality that are easier to trust.

d. Laws (other than physical laws) are formulas for decision-making. They can sometimes have the effect of increasing trust in an environment.

e. One way to trust is through a competition of formulas.

10.

a. Guilt: you did something, therefore don't trust yourself.

b. Shame: you are experienced by a person as being something, therefore don't trust yourself.

c. We can move from guilt-proneness to shame-proneness. We try to forget our unalterable past selves and become what we can.

d. We can move from shame-proneness to guilt-proneness. We give up the shame-avoiding project, assuming that we will always be the kind of people to be untrustworthy.

e. Guilt and shame say, "I messed up, I'm a terrible person", but if you seek reality, you say, "I messed up, how unfortunate for those people I harmed."

We can also seek reality. We can seek the experiences which are most real, instead of the largest experiences and the most experiences.

What is real? In every experience, there is personality. In fact, without persons, there would be no experiences – that is what we experience. (Persons need not just be human beings.)

Experiences belong to persons. Experiences just are parts of persons. Persons are made out of experiences, united in a distinct point of view, flowing through time, with a life-history to them (a life-story, a life-process).

When we are around certain persons, then we experience the greatest reality. Around these people, we are most really ourselves. We trust reality fully when we are around these people, and this makes us real, ourselves.

(For reasons which will be clearer later, this way of life of seeking reality I will call "mission".)

Around other people, we get burned. This threatens to disintegrate our stream of experiences, our life-history. We grab for new trustings, new experiences, and we may develop a new prudence. But having been burned, we can also close ourselves off to reality. We can experience less, less in each moment, and with less reality, and stay away from new experiences. So prudence protects us from this period in which we are not our most real selves, when we are not seeking and trusting reality.

And adventure seeks reality, in quantity, reaching out everywhere for it, not knowing what it looks for. Mission seeks the deeper reality of personal beings, who, as they experience, are all that really is.

These three ways of life, then, just are seekings of knowing what is. Therefore, as far as the three of them cover the seekings of personal beings, life is just seeking what is, and thus is compatible with seeking the truth.

3.

I call mission “mission” because there is an element of work to it. If you seek reality, you seek persons, and you seek their fullest reality, which is when they can trust to their fullest, which is just to exist to their fullest. You seek to know persons exactly as they are, no more or less than they are, knowing their trustworthiness and if they are untrustworthy, the limits of their trustworthiness.

Persons are just what they are. A mechanism can be interrelated with other mechanisms to make a system, and both the system and the mechanism might be fully predictable, fully an expression of a formula or formulas. But a person is not. Persons are formulalessnesses. We see formulas easily but must break them over and over in order to see persons.

Perhaps it requires a betrayal to break our formulas. Some betrayals, while in themselves reality-blanking horrors, have the long-term result of enabling us to see more clearly, and thus are both untrustworthy and trustworthy. They are trustworthy only if we learn from

m. You don’t fully trust what you find too precious.⁷

n. When careless or threatened, we act without awareness. So we do not trust ourselves fully in our very reaching back into other people’s lives.

o. Trusting whatever and all, the “arms beneath the universe”, whatever may be, is a receptivity to enhancement. We can also fail to be suspicious about specific things. We are vulnerable to betrayal by what we do not see. But does everything-in-the-end betray us?

p. We trust in the future. We lay something down in the present in order to experience it anew in the future. We continually trust in the meantime that there is a future of some sort.

8.

a. In untrustworthy times (in successions of untrustworthy moments), we turn to what we have found most trustworthy.

b. We trust a stream because each element is trustworthy. Eventually we trust the stream itself.

9.

a. Pain is a physical or emotional limit on openness to reality.

⁷ p. 18

f. Another lack of trust: your lack of openness to someone. Your lack of trust does not necessarily know anything about their untrustworthiness.

g. Your gut could be wrong, but you have to trust it. Your lack of openness could be wrong, but you choose to trust it.

h. Watchfulness is a withholding of trust, and also an increase in awareness, which is a form of trust.

i. There is a desperate trust, which does not seek reality. It is the shadow twin of dismissiveness. Neither are watchful.³

j. We trust systems, and these systems can be open (in a systemic way) to the input of a leader.⁴

k. Living another moment is a basic form of enhancement.⁵

l. Holding onto your life can betray someone, even yourself. Your life is a stream of experience, which is fragile to any betrayal. Your untrusted self, and that which experiences your experiences (your half of empiricism) are not necessarily threatened by complete disintegration of what is seen.⁶

them. It could be said that awareness comes through pain, but awareness is better than pain.

Mission has an element of calling to it. We become aware that there are persons all around us in the world, and if we start to work toward the reality of one person, we may as well work toward the reality of yet another after that person. We help them become more real people, and we also seek to become more real people ourselves. We seek a world of full and deep trust, which requires the world to become more and more trustworthy.

Mission seeks to be with the most real person or persons in order to trust in the most real way.

Mission seeks to be a real person bringing about reality.

4.

Persons themselves call for both contemplation and action. This is why mission has been described as a working. And mission folds into itself both adventure and prudence in its working.

Pure mission is rest. There is nothing left but to be fully open to reality, with nothing to accomplish. When there is really nothing left to accomplish, there is nothing but openness to the persons which exist.

³ Inspired by Godfrey, p. 17

⁴ Also inspired by Godfrey, p. 17

⁵ Also p. 17

⁶ p. 18

Further thoughts:

5.

a. If we trust ourselves prematurely, we may become fake. We trust our trust prematurely, and we think we're fully open to reality, but we are not.

b. There is a betrayal which does not feel like betrayal. We betray a silent, unfeeling, that is, unseen self. [Alt: What is betrayed is our silent, unfeeling, that is, unseen self.] We do not always trust ourselves fully.

c. A context is an alternate past and future to our lives, for the moment we are in. It has its own logic and values. Then, we return to the context we have known. How do we get from one to the other? No one knows, but we can be aware of having left one. Having left a context, we are very different, and yet the experience in the past really was, so we reason. Through science, we try to relate the values of the past context with the present. If we succeed, we can bring that context in line with our normal stream of life. We do this, sometimes, to avoid experiencing betrayal.

d. We can betray a person who is not real to us.

e. Someone trusts us when we do not trust ourselves.

6.

a. Experience follows experience in a trustworthy pattern. This is mechanism, systems, language, relationship.

b. There is an outside to experience, an openness to the world we do not see.

c. I want to trust myself, and myself as truster, so I share my plans before I begin to carry them out, the ones which I trust, to see if my trust and my faculty of trust are valid.

d. Trust can be threatening. A particular trusting can be untrustworthy. Even trustworthy trust can lead to betrayal.

e. When power is a broken relationship, it is a lack of trust.

7.

a. Something can, in some sense, be 100% trustworthy in itself, and yet, you are not ready to trust it because based on your overall way of trusting, to trust the one thing connects you to untrustworthy realities.

b. Love is a school for learning the true nature of trustworthiness.

c. Conscientiousness is a part of love.

d. Lack of awareness protects you from experiences but makes you the conduit of things you don't intend.

e. One lack of trust: the gut's distrust when you say "I don't trust that person". Your lack of trust knows something about their untrustworthiness.